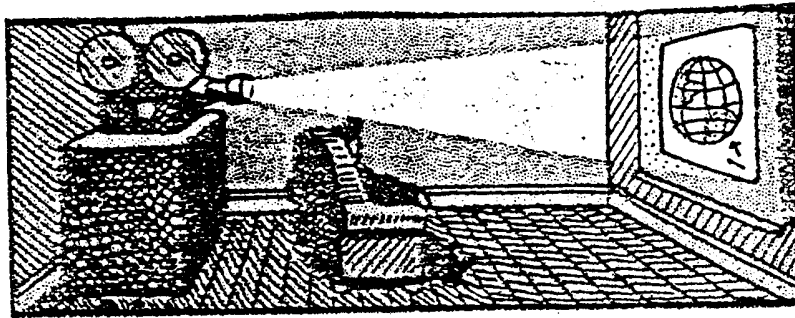


ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A16

THE NEW YORK TIMES
24 December 1981



Charles Walker

Reagan Views Films to Get The Diplomatic Edge

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 — The lights go off, the projector rolls and President Reagan settles back in his chair to prepare for his first meeting with a foreign head of state. It is the White House version of "This Is Your Life," and among the film subjects so far have been Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel, King Hussein of Jordan and Anwar el-Sadat, the late President of Egypt.

What the President sees is a special film, put together by the Central Intelligence Agency, that includes a mixture of footage from American and foreign television and classified material from Government agencies. The film includes commentary to give the President insights into the life, rhetoric and work of foreign leaders, most of whom are strangers to Mr. Reagan.

The film is used to supplement the voluminous briefing books that

Administration officials prepare for the President before he meets with a foreign head of state. Mr. Reagan, according to White House sources, prefers the film briefing to the heavy reading because he feels it gives him a better feel for foreign leaders and their style.

David R. Gergen, director of White House communications, said the video-briefings are a "normal procedure" that are not new to the Reagan White House and that the films are made up primarily of public footage.

Jimmy Carter, who preferred the printed word and thrived on briefing books, used the film briefing "once or twice" in his Presidency, according to Zbigniew Brzezinski, Mr. Carter's national security adviser. Mr. Reagan, however, with his roots in the celluloid world, is devoted to the screen versions.

Phil Gailey